

1                   **CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ON COMPREHENSIVE**  
2                   **STATEWIDE WILDLAND FIRE PREVENTION,**  
3                   **PREPAREDNESS, AND SUPPRESSION POLICY**

4                                   2014 GENERAL SESSION

5                                   STATE OF UTAH

6                                   **Chief Sponsor: Evan J. Vickers**

7                                   House Sponsor: Joel K. Briscoe

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9                   **LONG TITLE**

10                   **General Description:**

11                   This concurrent resolution of the Legislature and the Governor expresses support for  
12                   Catastrophic Wildfire Reduction Strategy and strongly urges its implementation.

13                   **Highlighted Provisions:**

14                   This resolution:

- 15                   ▶ expresses the Legislature's strong desire to reduce catastrophic wildfires;
- 16                   ▶ expresses support for the recommendations in the Catastrophic Wildfire Reduction  
17                   Strategy;
- 18                   ▶ strongly urges the Division of Forestry, Fire, and State Lands to implement the  
19                   recommendations in the Catastrophic Wildfire Reduction Strategy in partnership  
20                   with the Catastrophic Wildfire Reduction Steering Committee and guided by the  
21                   report's recommendations;
- 22                   ▶ strongly urges the state forester to report to the Natural Resources, Agriculture, and  
23                   Environment Interim Committee regarding progress on implementing the strategy,  
24                   particularly the progress of the "Regionally Significant Projects"; and
- 25                   ▶ strongly urges the Utah Division of Forestry, Fire, and State Lands to coordinate the  
26                   development of a Comprehensive Statewide Wildland Fire Prevention,  
27                   Preparedness, and Suppression Policy.

28                   **Special Clauses:**

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*Be it resolved by the Legislature of the state of Utah, the Governor concurring therein:*

WHEREAS, catastrophic wildland fires continue to be a major problem in Utah;

WHEREAS, catastrophic wildland fires inflict significant damage and financial burdens on the state and its citizens;

WHEREAS, the significant impacts of catastrophic wildland fires to state and local economies, critical infrastructure, the environment, and private landowners have increased and are projected to continue to increase in frequency and severity;

WHEREAS, poor forest health caused by invasive species, lack of setback in plant succession, disease, and changes in climatic conditions have produced large areas in the state with heavy fuels or "firesheds" which, if ignited, can burn in a catastrophic manner;

WHEREAS, Utah experiences an average of 1,498 wildfires each year that result in millions of dollars in taxpayer expense;

WHEREAS, studies show that every dollar spent in prevention of wildfires results in a savings of \$17 in suppression costs;

WHEREAS, following the fire season of 2012, the Governor directed the commissioner of the Department of Agriculture and Food to develop a strategy to reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfire in Utah;

WHEREAS, the commissioner of the Department of Agriculture and Food convened a Statewide Catastrophic Wildfire Reduction Steering Committee;

WHEREAS, in December 2013, the Statewide Catastrophic Wildfire Reduction Steering Committee released a Catastrophic Wildfire Reduction Strategy, which contains specific recommendations to address fire suppression;

WHEREAS, the Catastrophic Wildfire Reduction Strategy includes seven recommendations:

1. Statewide Coordination of Mitigation Resources.
2. A Catastrophic Fire Reduction Fund.
3. Regional Collaborative Working Groups to Perform Needs Assessment and

58 Prioritization Across the State.

59 4. Technical Committees to Respond to Specific Concerns of Statewide Importance.

60 5. Adopt Key Recommendations from the National Cohesive Wildland Fire

61 Management Strategy.

62 6. Increase Public Understanding and Participation.

63 7. The central steering committee should report annually to the Governor and the

64 Legislature the actions planned and taken.

65 WHEREAS, the Catastrophic Wildfire Reduction Strategy identifies "Regionally  
66 Significant Projects" recommended by six regional working groups that include a full  
67 complement of prevention and preparedness actions; and

68 WHEREAS, the administration and staff of the Utah Department of Natural Resources'  
69 Division of Forestry, Fire, and State Lands have knowledge, expertise, and processes in place  
70 to execute the recommendations in the Catastrophic Wildfire Reduction Strategy:

71 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of the state of Utah, the  
72 Governor concurring therein, expresses a strong desire to reduce catastrophic wildfires.

73 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature and the Governor express support  
74 for the recommendations and initiatives contained in the Catastrophic Wildfire Reduction  
75 Strategy and recognize the positive impacts of the recommendations within the report.

76 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature and the Governor strongly urge the  
77 Division of Forestry, Fire, and State Lands to implement the recommendations in the  
78 Catastrophic Wildfire Reduction Strategy in partnership with the Catastrophic Wildfire  
79 Reduction Steering Committee and guided by the report's recommendations.

80 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature and the Governor strongly urge the  
81 state forester to report to the Natural Resources, Agriculture, and Environment Interim  
82 Committee regarding progress on implementing the strategy, particularly the progress of the  
83 "Regionally Significant Projects."

84 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature and the Governor strongly urge the  
85 Utah Division of Forestry, Fire, and State Lands to coordinate the development of a

86 Comprehensive Statewide Wildland Fire Prevention, Preparedness, and Suppression Policy.

87           BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be sent to the Utah  
88 Division of Forestry, Fire, and State Lands; the Utah Department of Agriculture and Food; the  
89 United States Bureau of Land Management; the United States Forest Service; the Utah  
90 Association of Counties; Trout Unlimited; the Nature Conservancy; the Beaver County  
91 Commission; the Box Elder County Commission; the Daggett County Commission; the Iron  
92 County Commission; the Kane County Commission; the Tooele County Commission; the  
93 Washington County Commission; the Utah Conservation Commission; the School and  
94 Institutional Trust Lands Administration; the Natural Resources Conservation Service in the  
95 United States Department of Agriculture; and the members of Utah's congressional delegation.